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THE Commonweal

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THE PARADOX OF CIVIL DEFENSE

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NASSER'S NEXT MOVE

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TRIAL OF ABBÉ DAVEZIES

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Momentous Step

THE PRESIDENT has decided. After many months of weighing the evidence and the arguments on both sides of this somber question, Mr. Kennedy has concluded that the United States has no alternative but to resume atmospheric nuclear tests.

Most Americans will respond to this news with sorrow and disappointment. All Americans, whatever they may have thought about this issue previously, must have been moved by the President's own sense of the gravity and scope of the consequences involved.

Because the editors of The Commonweal have long been counted among those who urged U.S. abstention from nuclear tests for as long as possible without irrevocable loss of deterrent security, we respond to the President's decision with particular lamentation. It was only a few weeks ago that we were citing the contradictory conclusions reached by the pro- and anti-test factions, both in and out of government. We expressed a considerable lack of confidence, on the basis of the record, in the people and groups in favor of the resumption of tests. We conceded the risks to national security in not advancing our nuclear technology but emphasized also the risks involved in the opposite course—resuming tests and beginning a new cycle in the arms spiral.

Our fears remain that another round in the nuclear arms contest can never give us security and peace. But precisely because we have these fears and have expressed them so often in the past, it seems to us important to go on record now with our appreciation of the way President Kennedy has put his case before the American people and the world.

The President's announcement of the decision to resume tests was remarkable on many counts. He made it clear that the judgment he has made was arrived at only after the most exhaustive deliberation and only with the most profound reluctance. He took pains to detail every step in the thinking which culminated in the somber decision to authorize new tests. He recounted the long and frustrating history of our disarmament negotiations with the Soviet Union, negotiations which were broken off only when the Soviet Union last September ended the moratorium with a major series of tests.

Mr. Kennedy was precise and complete in the technical analysis of the importance of the Soviet tests, neither exaggerating nor denying the significance of what they achieved. He was precise, too, in explaining what kinds of tests he and his advisers had decided were indispensable—tests of the effects of high-altitude nuclear explosions on defense radar and communications systems, as well as ground installations; and tests of anti-missile devices such as the Soviet Union has apparently tried out.

Unlike some of the leaders of the so-called "test lobby," Mr. Kennedy did not discount the importance of nuclear fallout. He treated this question gravely, describing the careful preparations that will be made to limit radioactive debris to an absolute minimum and to control its movement to the fullest possible extent. Nor did the President slight the importance of world opinion in reaction to his decision. The thoroughness of his presentation was itself convincing evidence that he was aware of the criticism the U.S. decision would meet overseas and sensitive to the need to meet this criticism.

FINALLY, and perhaps most importantly, Mr. Kennedy coupled the test announcement with repeated invitations to the U.S.S.R. to enter into a binding disarmament plan in time to call off the projected U.S. tests. Certainly it was a proof of good faith to offer to halt the arms race before our own tests, when the Soviet Union is one round ahead, so to speak. "Our real objective," said the President, "is to make our own tests unnecessary, to prevent others from testing, to prevent the nuclear arms race from mushrooming out of control, to take the first steps toward general and complete disarmament."

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And it may well be that this direct challenge to the Soviets will move them, as nothing else has, to serious and sincere disarmament negotiation.

All this, it seems to us, made an impressive display of Presidential responsibility, leadership and initiative. We are not happy at the decision Mr. Kennedy has made, but even those who might be unconvinced that this was the only decision possible must react with respect to the way in which it was reached.

Our own position on the test issue has not been an easy, doubt-free conviction—who could pretend to such knowledge and wisdom?—but an appeal to consider some aspects of the problem we feared were being slighted. The President has now made it clear that he has considered, deeply and long, every possible aspect of the dilemma he faced. Having weighed all the arguments, in the detail and specificity that others do not and can not have, he has made the decision which is his alone to make.

It is not appropriate to commend Mr. Kennedy for the judgment he has made in this profoundly serious matter. But in the way he has fulfilled the grave responsibilities of his office in regard to the question of tests—with integrity, patience and sober strength—he deserves to be given the sympathy of his fellow-citizens and the assurance of their regard and support as he strives to meet his "solemn obligation."

Nature of the Challenge

ALWAYS FAIR GAME for the country's political moderates and liberals, the extremists of the political Right have been coming in for their lumps during the past few weeks from people they have long regarded as allies. When Mr. Nixon sought to persuade the California G.O.P. wholly to repudiate the John Birch Society the other day, his move followed hard upon a whole series of comparable disavowals by conservatives prominent in the nation's political and polemical life.

It seems likely, however, that Father John F. Cronin's new booklet, "Communism: Threat to Freedom," will have the greatest impact of any criticism that has been developed yet. Its official character has perhaps been overstated, although the author has long been Assistant Director of the Social Action Department of the N.C.W.C., which is planning to distribute the study in large numbers in concert with the Paulist Press. Father Cronin himself views its publication as the start of a campaign of education, and a certain authority derives simply from the fact that he has been recognized as such a serious student of Communism for the past two decades.

There is no mistaking the thrust of this realistic treatise happily due for such wide distribution throughout the land. From the outset the author stresses the magnitude of the present Communist threat to our way of life and to other peoples. He signalizes the dynamic character of the Communist ideology, the impact of its imflammatory message upon the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America—men increasingly resentful over their wretched lot—and the Soviets' undeniable military might. He also outlines the principal strategies of propaganda, diplomatic and economic pressure and subversion whereby the Communists are seeking to advance toward domination of the world.

Father Cronin's crucial conclusion is the outcome of a painstaking scrutiny of the nature of the Communist threat today. To the question whether this threat comes primarily from within or without he gives an unequivocal answer which many professional American anti-Communists will take as a hard saying: "the basic threat of Communism is external, not internal."

This well argued and well documented conviction is the basis for the combination of domestic reforms, strengthened defenses and foreign aid he advances as his prescription. But it also impels him to charge that those who ignore what is the real threat, from without, and "who would concentrate on a minor threat of domestic subversion . . . are effectively aiding the Communist cause."

The lines for action advocated in this compelling study combine those elements which will strengthen the United States politically, economically, morally and socially with measures designed to strengthen the allied and uncommitted nations. It calls upon the individual citizen to undertake all manner of civic, charitable and educational activities in order to meet the challenge. In capsule form Father Cronin's message reads: "Do your part to make this a better and a stronger nation, and we shall not fear what the Communists plot and scheme against us. Above all, we must have a broader vision of world needs."

"Socialized Medicine" and Congress

LAST YEAR, the Administration's medical care bill failed to survive the ministrations of the House Ways and Means Committee, and prospects for the President's recommendations this year can only be described as mixed. Opposition to his Social Security-financed plan—from the American Medical Association, insurance company lobbies and conservative Congressional leaders—has hardened and intensified. On the other hand, however, there are

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indications that grass-roots sentiment for the Kennedy plan is making itself increasingly felt and cutting across party lines. If that is so, even the arch-enemies of what they describe as "socialized medicine" may be afraid to rouse the ire of their constituents in an election year.

Some evidence that popular support for the President's bill is indeed growing may be seen, ironically, in the denial of that fact by a number of Republican spokesmen. Democratic Congressmen have been reading the results of innumerable polls into the Congressional Record, almost all of them showing overwhelming support for the Administration's Social Security plan. The latest rebuttal from the other side of the aisle denies of course that this support is "overwhelming," but the denials are now taking the form of insistence that only forty-six per cent of the folks back home are in favor of the Kennedy bill. When Republican Congressmen maintain that only forty-six per cent of their constituents are in favor of "socialized medicine," it seems to us, then startling things have already happened in the G.O.P.

One More Victory

WHILE congratulations are hardly in order, one can at least marvel at the ingenuity of Southern legal maneuvers to deprive Negroes of their constitutional rights. By foul means and fair, Southern legislators, police chiefs, governors and attorney generals have thrown one road-block after another in the way of the implementation of federal laws and Supreme Court decisions. Moreover, Southern local and state courts have, by deliberate slowness in hearing and ruling on civil rights cases, made the gaining of rights an expensive and time-consuming process.

In recent months, however, there have been signs that a greater effort is being made to speed segregation cases through the federal court system. In addition, it would appear that the Supreme Court is making some effort to render broader decisions so as to forestall further legal delays in effecting integration. The most notable recent decision was, in this respect, a significant one. Ruling on an appeal against a decision by a special panel of federal judges, the Supreme Court denied that it was necessary for the constitutionality of a state law on segregated travel to be decided first in a state court. On the contrary, the Supreme Court held, "we have settled beyond question that no state may require racial segregation of interstate or intrastate transportation facilities."

What was especially noteworthy about the decision was the pointed language it used. One could hardly disagree with its finding that "the constitutional issue is essentially fictitious." Of course, few had any doubts on this point in the first place. But it is good for the court to state its position bluntly and unequivocally, in language that even the uninformed layman cannot miss. For the Freedom Riders whose case initiated the decision, the ruling ought to be particularly satisfying. They took the risks, they brought the matter of the right to integrated travel to the public eye. The Supreme Court decision seems to us a great vindication of the bold and courageous means they chose to combat injustice.

Friends Divided

EVER SINCE the end of World War II the United States has maintained a solid relationship with its Western allies. At times, to be sure, sharp differences have appeared and harsh words have been exchanged. But with the possible exception of the U.S. condemnation of the Anglo-French Suez venture, the differences have been those appropriate to friends with common needs and differing viewpoints on means. The most common need, obviously enough, has been to resist effectively the spread of Soviet domination. Hardly less important has been the need for mutual economic well-being. A basic working-principle of Western relations has been that the fate of any one Western nation inevitably affects the fate of all the others.

Nevertheless, it has become apparent in the last year or so that even the most natural and excusable differences on tactics can be exceedingly damaging. The main damage such differences cause has little to do with maintaining a Western image of unity and solidarity. No doubt the projection of such an image has a certain propaganda value. In the end, however, the only meaningful kind of unity is that which leads to an effective and concerted use of political, diplomatic, economic and military power. It matters comparatively little whether the West gives the appearance of solidarity. What does matter is whether the West can bring all of its great weight to bear on the same point at the same time.

Unfortunately, except for moments of great crisis, the power of the West has often been dissipated by tactical disagreements. In the end, as a rule, agreement is reached. But the cost, in terms of delay, hesitation and indecision has been high. What has been lost has been decisiveness of action, especially during the periodic lulls in the cold war when some important ground could be gained.

At the moment of this writing we appear to be in

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the midst of one of those relatively quiet periods, a period in which the direct Soviet threat as a tactic has been replaced by a diplomatic offensive. And, once again, the West finds itself divided about the best response to make. The key move in this new Soviet diplomatic gambit is, of course, Premier Khruschev's proposal for a summit meeting as part of the Geneva disarmament negotiations.

How has the West reacted? President Kennedy is skeptical of the value of any hasty summit meeting, and wary as well of traps. Prime Minister Macmillan has been hesitant and ambiguous. President de Gaulle has, as usual, been aloof, if not downright hostile to the very idea. Each man has his reasons. Mr. Kennedy's reasons turn on the failure of the current Gromyko-Thompson exploratory talks on Berlin, a recollection of the negative results of the Vienna talks, and a profound suspicion that the latest Soviet move is insincere. Mr. Macmillan, it would appear, is on principle committed to the value of discussion, particularly when lower level negotiations show no signs of success. At the other extreme, Mr. de Gaulle is committed to a simple show of power and a flat refusal to negotiate.

Beyond the immediate problem of the summit meeting, even more pressing long-range difficulties are emerging. The most crucial, perhaps, is the question of support for N.A.T.O. Not only do the Western powers have differing attitudes toward the importance of N.A.T.O.; these differences turn as much on national ambitions as they do on questions of military tactics. In particular, the ambitions of the French are proving to be exceedingly troublesome. For one thing, France wants a more decisive voice in the affairs of N.A.T.O. For another, France desires to become a nuclear power on a par with the United States and Great Britain. This latter desire can only be met by United States willingness to share information with the French—and the Administration has shown no desire to do so.

For its part, the British are finding it increasingly difficult to contribute their share of troops to the N.A.T.O. command. In its recent annual defense statement, "The Next Five Years," the British noted that its ability to maintain its 55,000 troops in West Germany would depend on its balance of payments position—a position which is unfavorable at the moment and not likely to improve. The only hope for a change in this position lies in the possibility that the West Germans will make a contribution to the support of the British troops. While there has been much talk of this kind of support, Chancellor Adenauer has not yet made any significant moves of a practical kind. For the West Germans too, it would appear, desire to wield influence and are reluctant to spend money on either American or British troops.

The over-all picture that emerges from a look at the Western alliance is not a bright one. While there is little to suggest any real break in the near future, the likelihood of a period of increased strain and stress is strong. That this strain should come at a time when unity is particularly necessary is exceedingly unfortunate. Inevitably, it would seem, the West is going to have as much trouble putting its house in order as in meeting new Soviet moves.

Trial of Abbé Davezies

Paris

THE ALGERIAN war has produced many crises of conscience among the French people. Some of these arose from the numerous prosecutions of those who had rendered aid to the Algerian nationalists; some, on the contrary, from the prosecution of officers or civilians who had rebelled against the State in order to defend French Algeria. Last June the trials of the officers who had attempted the putsch disclosed the personal travail of some of them when they discovered that de Gaulle had decided to negotiate with the adversaries they had been under orders to fight for seven long years.

At the other end of the scale, a man I knew well, Abbé Robert Davezies, was also tried this year. A long reflection on the message of the Gospels was what led this young priest to be tried before a military court. He is now under close confinement in a prison of the Paris district working off a sentence of three years. The reason for the sentence was that he had harbored and convoyed to the frontier militants of the Algerian nationalists. Among them were men who attempted to assassinate Jacques Soustelle in 1959. Incidentally, a week after the condemnation of Abbé Davezies, the same military tribunal acquitted "purely and simply" three officers convicted of having tortured to death a young Algerian woman in the attempt to make her talk.

Abbé Davezies is of peasant origin and worked for his licentiate in science before being ordained in 1951. Like many young French priests he ardently desired a deeper commitment than that of a curateship in some remote rural parish, and he secured his bishop's permission to go to Paris in order to study for a doctorate in science. Attached to the Mission de France, he joined a group of priests who were working in scientific circles, and it was there that his political conscience was awakened. During his trial he told how badly he had

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been upset in 1956 when he read the testimony of torture perpetrated in Algeria by French soldiers and officers in the struggle against the F.L.N. He had no choice, he said, but to combat these methods because men were the victims—also because having "taught French youth for years and years, we could not admit as priests of the Catholic Church that young men could be so corrupted under these conditions of war."

He took part, therefore, alongside François Mauriac, Henri Marrou, pastors and Catholic laymen, in the work of the Committee of Spiritual Resistance, which was conducting a campaign against the spread of such torture. But the reflections of this determined priest led him even further. He pondered the problem of the colonial situation and studied the economic, political and social conditions under which the Algerians lived in their own country. He discovered that the myth of French Algeria involved an "extremely harsh exploitation of the colonized people." He came to the conclusion that the F.L.N. was fighting a just war, not "to throw Algerians of European stock into the sea but against the colonial yoke." One day he decided to take a bold step. In his quarters he was well known by Algerians who often came to ask his help. He met political militants and little by little came to shelter and assist them. He made plain to the court that he had not helped militants to reach the frontier in order that they might commit a crime. He did not know who they were or what they were doing. What it amounted to was that he gave them aid without asking questions. He saw this as an act of charity, transcending the individual in order to address the whole community, and an act which seemed to him "conformable to a tradition of honor towards men who were being persecuted."

As to the political basis of the problem, Abbé Davezies had received a sort of *nihil obstat* from Cardinal Liénart, Bishop of the Mission de France. Basing himself on the teachings of the Church, the Cardinal in a letter addressed to the court recalled that "the Mission de France especially recognized the basic legitimacy of the aspirations of the Algerian people to independence and at the same time the necessity of protecting the authentic rights of the Europeans. It has reiterated that peace must be sought in the recognition and harmonizing of rights through negotiations or arbitration. The Mission has set forth the conditions for a true patriotism which must give due recognition to other countries and not deteriorate into national egoism. . . . I am convinced, and I insist on saying, that it was in a spirit of justice and brotherly love that he sought to act in a complex situation. . . .

"The acts and intentions of Father Davezies cannot be understood independently of the general context under which they developed. The Algerian war has created a situation of violence which is extremely grievous for many and in which we all find ourselves implicated in varying degrees. It poses difficult problems for those who are aware that the values of peace and justice are what need to be defended and promoted."

A prince of the Church is therefore in agreement with Abbé Davezies on the level of principles: the Algerian people have the right to independence. But another debate arose in the course of this trial. Father Davezies was a man of peace inimical to any form of violence. Appalled by the frightful lot of the Algerian people, he resolved to do everything in his power to obtain justice for them. He was led by the logic of his action and that of the war to aid not only fugitives but, without knowing it, terrorists as well. He thus came to take his part in a violence that he did not desire; he defended himself on this point with courage and nobility, and without seeking to utilize his ignorance as an alibi.

But as a Christian—and what is more, a priest—did Abbé Davezies have the right, in rejecting the violence of his own camp, to become an instrument, even an unconscious instrument, of the violence of the opposing camp? Here is a general problem on which a witness, Pastor Lazalis, spoke as follows: "Certain positions put one implicitly in solidarity with certain acts of violence. The question is a painful one. But if a man fails to act he becomes a party to other acts of violence which tend to weigh still more heavily in the balance of injustice. In this scheme of things I believe that Abbé Davezies chose a violence which liberates in opposition to a violence which oppresses."

One might, in conclusion, cite an excerpt from the deposition of the writer Jacques Madaule: "For a Frenchman, for a Christian, to opt apparently against his own compatriots, against those who lay claim to Christian civilization, it was a painful choice which risked being misunderstood but was nevertheless a necessary choice. France occupies a warm place in the sentiments of the peoples of the world because of its reputation as a nation that liberates. Who could have believed this any longer if no Frenchman had risen up to take his place at the side of those whom French authorities were oppressing? As to Christianity, it teaches us that the Christian's place is with the poor, the humiliated, those who suffer injury. As often as a supposed Christian civilization has had recourse to certain means it has denied its heritage. . . .

"Instead of being prosecuted Robert Davezies should have been praised for having acted in a way to make true reconciliation between today's enemies possible. If the French people and the Algerian people can one day march together toward the future, oblivious of a grievous and bloody past, it is men such as Robert Davezies who will be responsible."

ROBERT BARRAT

(M. Barrat has long been The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Paris.)

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Conservatives and Extremists

AT A RECENT press conference, President Kennedy had the opportunity to try to hang the albatross of right-wing extremism around the neck of the G.O.P. He passed up the chance, and I am very glad he did. The temptation to turn American party politics into ideological warfare is one that should always be resisted.

Of course, if the President had tried to make right-wing extremism exclusively a Republican problem, he would have faced a few practical difficulties. There are segregationists in the Southern wing of the Democratic party who have shown themselves quite ready to take allies wherever they can find them, and it is the Democratic primary, after all, in which General Walker is contesting for the Texas gubernatorial nomination. But if Mr. Kennedy had chosen to do so, he could have made a certain case.

Historically, left-wing extremism is the liberal temptation, finally met head-on when liberal and labor groups barred Communists as totalitarians with no place in democratic organizations. Right-wing extremism is the matching conservative temptation, and for the conservative and business community the radical on the right today poses a danger analogous to that posed to liberal groups by Communists in the thirties and early forties.

At this point there are some signs to indicate that a long-overdue process of conservative self-examination is under way. Senator Barry Goldwater has publicly called for the resignation of Robert Welch as head of the John Birch Society. Congressman Walter Judd has said he regards Mr. Welch as lacking in judgment and unqualified for anti-Communist leadership. Russell Kirk—to me perhaps the leading conservative theoretician on the American scene—has castigated Mr. Welch for silliness and injustice of utterance. Rumors of disaffection inside the top leadership of the John Birch Society are strong, and an editorial on Robert Welch in William F. Buckley's *National Review* called for rejecting, "out of a love of truth and country, his false counsels."

I take all this, including the editorial in the *National Review*, as potentially most significant. I must admit, before it is pointed out to me, that there is little in the American conservative record or, more specifically, in the past editorial positions of the *National Review* to justify much optimism. It is true that in moving against Mr. Welch there is a certain self-interest involved for conservatives: the extremism of the head of the John Birch Society is bringing disrepute on the entire group. But the important thing is that action be taken, and on this score motives need not concern us. If both political self-interest and national interest counsel resistance to right-wing as to left-wing extremism, so much the better.

In this matter we should be clear on what is meant by extremism. The extremism of the right-wing certainly does not consist in the fact that it is anti-Communist. The man who does not fear Communism is a knave or a fool. No, the question is what kind of response we are to make to this fearsome ideology, and the trouble with the response of the far right-wing is that it is non-rational and even anti-rational.

In this framework the extremist is not the man who is opposed to the United Nations while I am for it; it is the man who says that to be for the U.N. makes one a part of the Communist conspiracy. The extremist is not the man who says that the U.S. Armed Forces should be used against Castro; it is the man who says those who oppose such intervention form part of the Communist conspiracy. The extremist is not the man who says the Communists have made great gains since World War II, as heaven knows they have, but he who ascribes every gain to betrayal at home—a betrayal shared, of course, by everyone who does not agree with his own particular remedies.

The test, in short, is not whether a man holds strong views for or against segregation, or the U.N., or fluoridation of water. The test is whether he explains the major events of recent history in terms of conspiracy and slanders all who disagree by saying that they aid and abet that conspiracy, "consciously or unconsciously." This last gambit is the triumph of political non-rationality, and on this score I think conservatives will have to do more than blackball Mr. Welch; they will have to ask how much they themselves have contributed to develop such a climate of opinion.

In its editorial on Robert Welch, the *National Review* noted that "two anti-Communists, evaluating the same problem, can honestly advocate different approaches towards the same solution." On its face this may seem obvious enough, but it is a truism to which violence is often done by conservatives, usually because of their refusal to grant that anyone who rejects their favorite but often irrelevant theories can be a dedicated and effective anti-Communist.

In point of fact, to my mind the biggest failure of American conservatism itself has been precisely on this score. Despite their appropriation of the anti-Communist label, few who call themselves conservatives strike me, at least, as even half-way effective anti-Communists. But this is what I question—their effectiveness, not their sincerity. I hope they are now ready to do the same for the rest of us. JAMES O'GARA

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Insurance or Provocation?

The Paradox of Civil Defense

RONALD STEEL

OUT OF THE current morass of the fallout shelter debate, three uncomfortable facts emerge. 1) Civil defense is an essential corollary of nuclear deterrence. 2) It cannot be had cheaply—either monetarily or morally. 3) It marks a significant intensification of the arms race.

Only by dissipating some of the emotional fog around the civil defense controversy can we deal objectively with the facts we have to work with. And perhaps from that may come a rational decision on what we still can do.

First, unpleasant as the realization may be, it is rational to assume that fallout shelters can to some extent mitigate the effects of a nuclear attack. The degree of mitigation will depend largely upon the kind of attack, but partially upon the adequacy of the shelters. A minimal fallout shelter program, such as the Kennedy Administration has proposed, will offer some fallout protection for millions of people in areas remote from target areas. It cannot save the millions in target areas who would die almost immediately from blast and thermal effects of a thermonuclear explosion—but it does not presume to protect those people.

Any realistic appraisal of nuclear war must begin by writing off our major cities and the people who inhabit them. This may be too high a price to pay, but we should be clear that we are paying it, since it has been an unexpressed corollary of our nuclear deterrent for more than a decade. The fallout shelter program, let it be said bluntly, has little relevance for those who live or work in the cities and their suburbs. To pretend otherwise is to engage in the most myopic self-deception.

How many lives might be saved by a national system of fallout shelters? In 1959 the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy considered a fifteen hundred-megaton attack on the United States, estimating that some fifty million people would be killed—three-quarters of them by immediate heat, blast and radiation, the other quarter from fallout. Using these figures as a guide, it would appear that fallout shelters might save some twelve million people who would otherwise perish. What it would save them *for* is another question that doesn't bear directly on the question.

Faster missiles and bigger hydrogen bombs have made this estimate seem unduly conservative. A recent study by McGraw-Hill estimates that in a ten thousand-megaton attack, more than forty per cent of the nation's land area would be affected by blast and heat, and more than ninety per cent by fallout. An attack on both military and civilian targets would kill one hundred and twenty million Americans by blast and heat *whether or not* there were fallout shelters. It is McGraw-Hill's guess that fallout might take an additional forty million lives, and that these lives might possibly be saved by fully-equipped group shelters and a "well-disciplined population."

NOBODY knows, of course, whether an attack on the U.S. would take fifty million, one hundred million, or one hundred and sixty million lives. Nor do we know whether our cities or our military sites will be the major targets, although we can reasonably expect that once nuclear war has begun there will be little distinction between military and civilian targets. We cannot even be sure that lethal fallout will be widespread—perhaps firestorms are a far more likely danger. But whatever the effects of a nuclear holocaust, it is not totally unreasonable to assume that fallout shelters might save the lives of those far from target areas.

What are the target areas? Just as we know our military strategists have marked out Soviet cities as well as Soviet missile bases for retaliation, we can fairly assume that our cities would be targets of Soviet missiles. We also know that any nation which is attacked first must retaliate against his opponent's cities. Where else would he direct his thermonuclear bombs—against the attacker's empty missile sites?

The object of modern warfare, as we should have learned from Hamburg and Hiroshima, is not to spare either people or cities—it is to destroy them. With nuclear weapons as the backstop of our diplomacy, and cities as hostages, we have tried to prevent actions inimical to our interests by threatening atomic warfare.

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The trouble is that our opponent can retaliate in kind. In effect, we have been saying that an intolerable political provocation will force us to kill our adversary and then shoot ourselves.

Nuclear diplomacy makes sense only if it is never invoked, for it relies upon this preposterous premise of self-annihilation. So long as that remains our policy and we threaten nuclear war over issues like Berlin (which would eradicate the city we are trying to protect), we might as well build fallout shelters to make our threats more credible, and try to save the rural population.

As Eugene Rabinowitch has pointed out in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists:* "A state contemplating war as an alternative to compromise or retreat—as America is now—has the duty to face the survival aspects of its military program as frankly as it now faces the problem of military attack and retaliation. Our present complete lack of preparation in this area is part of the nightmarish quality of power politics in our time—a power contest in which both sides threaten nuclear war, but neither wants to face such a war as a realistic possibility."

SECONDLY, while civil defense is as rational as the policy of nuclear deterrence on which it hinges, it cannot be bought cheaply. In the current budget the Administration has earmarked $306 million for civil defense, mostly for marking shelter space in existing public buildings, and stockpiling food and medicine. For the next fiscal year it has proposed $700 million—an amount greater than the total federal civil defense outlay over the past ten years.

The main purpose of this program is to encourage construction of community fallout shelters to house some twenty million persons, and to take the edge off the anarchical do-it-yourself home shelter mania spurred by the President's July 25th speech. The public panic, the theological disputes on the limits of Christian charity, and the activities of fast-buck shelter entrepreneurs, have unleashed an element of savage social irresponsibility that lurks beneath American individualism. More in astonishment than in sorrow, the Administration finally had to step in with a coherent plan of its own. It is logical that the government, having committed the nation to the diplomacy of the nuclear deterrent, has the obligation to defend with shelters as much of the population as it can.

While the Administration's $700 million program is an enormous increase in civil defense, it is at once too much and too little. Too much because any money spent on fallout shelters in our major cities is money wasted. It could better be devoted to purer air, more schools, cheaper trains, or even circuses to divert us before the bombs start falling. The fallout program might enrich the shelter builders, stimulate the construction industry, and even give city-dwellers a cozy sense of security, but it is not very practical.

Although there are arguments about target priorities in a nuclear attack—some say cities would be prime targets, others that our missile bases would be hit first—depending on who strikes first, it is clear that an attacker need divert only one-tenth of the missiles used for a ten thousand-megaton strike to insure the obliteration of urban America. Missile bases, industrial production, and revenge are all good reasons for cities to be targets. Unpleasant as it is, we might as well recognize that our cities will be destroyed and their inhabitants either vaporized or carbonized. For them fallout, and fallout shelters, are irrelevant.

Gerard Piel, editor of the *Scientific American,* observed recently: "The federal effort to establish fallout shelters in the central cities will provide such protection if fallout is the hazard to which the population is exposed. If not, these shelters will trap the urban populations in blast and fire."

The rules of nuclear technology state that the higher the bomb is exploded, the less its fallout effects, and the greater the destruction by heat and blast. A twenty-megaton bomb has a blast radius of ten miles and an incendiary radius of thirty miles, while a fifty-megaton bomb has a blast radius of thirteen miles, but an incendiary radius of fifty miles. The larger the weapon, the more its incendiary power expands, since thermal effects increase as the square of explosive power while blast effects increase only as the cube root.

One twenty-megaton bomb detonated over a city could set off a firestorm covering an area of three thousand square miles, consuming the city and its suburbs in a sea of flame. The firestorm that swept Tokyo after an incendiary bomb attack killed an estimated one hundred thousand people in a single night. Blastproof bomb shelters provided no protection to the occupants, who were found cremated and suffocated when the shelters were opened. Fallout, for city-dwellers and suburbanites, seems to be an academic problem.

IT IS somewhat different for those living in smaller cities near missile bases. Enemy attacks against these bases would be at ground level in order to destroy the missiles. In the process, these bombs would radioactivate an enormous amount of earth and cause intense local fallout.

One study estimates that three hundred megatons would have to be dropped on Tucson to knock out the Titan missile bases rimming the city. While this would vaporize Tucson, it would also produce enough fallout to contaminate tens of thousands of square miles. Those who were far from the blast and thermal effects of such an explosion, but within range of fallout, might well benefit from shelters. They could mean the difference between death and some kind of life. If Arizonans or

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Oregonians want to build fallout shelters in their back yards, I would not try to dissuade them.

If the Administration, however, wants to shield the population—or the proportion that can be shielded—from nuclear attack, it should forget its puny fallout shelter scheme and present the astronomical bill required for placing the nation underground. Preliminary estimates indicate that a program offering minimal blast and heat protection, as well as relocation of vital services and industries underground, would cost at least $150 billion as a down payment. Assuming that the American people would acquiesce to such strategy (our political torpidity during the past few years gives little reason to assume otherwise), most of the nation's resources would be devoted to building an underground society while maintaining the readiness to fight a nuclear war.

This plan would, of course, entail a vastly-increased role for the military, but the groundwork for this has already been laid. Some would no doubt resist the militarization of the economy and the submergence of social values to the logic of the nuclear deterrent, but we could not expect them to fare any better than they have already—that is, hardly at all. The program, of course, would require several years for completion and demand the cooperation of the Soviet Union, as well as Communist China (when it gets nuclear weapons), not to provoke us while we are building our underground society.

No doubt the Administration wants no part of such a massive civil defense program. But it cannot have its nuclear cake and eat it too. By relying upon nuclear diplomacy, it must accept the likelihood of nuclear war—whether or not it is willing to pay for shelters. Candor, to turn a phrase, is the homage folly renders to reason.

THIRDLY, the fallout shelter program marks a further intensification of the arms race. This is not to say that shelters in themselves increase the likelihood of nuclear war. Rationally, there is no reason to believe that by attempting to shield a proportion of its population from the most immediate hazards of nuclear war, a government is thereby committing a hostile act. Even if the Soviets were to follow our lead and engage in massive shelter building themselves, we would hardly be justified in assuming this meant they were preparing to attack us.

The desire to survive a nuclear holocaust (insofar as it is possible) should not be considered the mark of depravity in a society any more than in an individual. Those who attack the shelter program as inherently provocative leave themselves vulnerable to the reasonable argument that there is nothing evil in self-preservation. It may be true that no shelter program can save more than a small proportion of the population, and that upon emerging the survivors might envy the dead, but one cannot be chastised for believing that it is better to struggle for life than to meekly accept immediate death. When we say that a national shelter program intensifies the arms race, we are really speaking of two things: 1) its psychological impact upon our adversaries, and 2) its effect on our own values and strategy.

In the first case, it is widely believed, even among ardent proponents of civil defense, that a massive U.S. shelter program might be a destabilizing factor in the arms race. It could intensify Soviet fears that we were preparing an attack under the belief that our sheltered citizens would suffer relatively minimal retaliation by the weakened Soviet missile force. As James King has written: "If either power wanted to launch a surprise attack . . . comparatively modest passive [civil] defense measures (*e.g.*, preparations to evacuate cities, and construction of fallout shelters) might notably improve its chances against retaliation. This would add to the attacker's confidence that the surprise need not prove intolerably costly."

In the eyes of the Soviets, a massive U.S. civil defense drive might seem the prelude to the final policy of "getting it over with" that some of our military and political leaders have suggested. Fearful of an American attack, it would be a purely rational decision for them to decide that their only chance lay in striking first before our attack was launched. What matters in this case is not our true intentions, but what the Russians might reasonably believe our intentions to be. The fact that each side might have erroneously estimated the other and that neither was planning a first strike would not prevent them from acting out of panic based on real fears.

In this way, the shelter program, instead of mitigating the dangers of nuclear war, or at least not intensifying them, could be the destabilizing factor making such a war more likely. This is why Herman Kahn, who has championed a large-scale shelter program, warned the Holifield committee in the last session of Congress that the biggest shelter program was not always the best. Trying to put a damper on Congressional enthusiasm for a $20 billion annual civil defense program, Kahn argued for a $5 billion ceiling: "I agree with the people who worry about civil defense accelerating the arms race . . ." he said. "I think if we went into a big program

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we would find Soviet reactions which we would be sorry to have touched off."

If a federal civil defense program could have a destabilizing influence on the already-tremulous balance of nuclear terror, what would be its effects on our own citizens? Most likely it would do what its advocates want it to do: make civilians start thinking about nuclear war. This is not necessarily a bad thing—if their thinking corresponds to the realities of the effects of nuclear weapons. If it would bring home to them the facts of one hundred and twenty million dead (two out of every three Americans), the long-term radioactivity of the earth, the struggle for survival amidst social anarchy, and the replacement of the American republic by a military dictatorship needed to keep order, the fallout shelter program will have served a useful, and even vital, public service.

But is this the effect it has had so far? Even a cursory perusal of the literature in the field fails to sustain such hopes. Most material dealing with fallout shelters, whether it is in the new government pamphlet, in the advertisements of profit-conscious shelter builders, or in the pages of the popular press, reveals either an ignorance about the effects of nuclear weapons or a deliberate masking of them.

When *Life* shows teen-agers gossiping on the telephone in family shelters and boasts that "ninety-seven out of one hundred can survive," it is playing a cruel hoax upon the American people. Even more distressing is that the nation, for the most part, has swallowed this hoax with scarcely a murmur of indigestion. Unwilling to conceive the consequences of nuclear war, most Americans are content to believe that the President's community fallout shelters will somehow or other insure a happy and prosperous future for themselves and their descendants.

BY ACCEPTING shelters, the nation has accepted not only the possibility but the feasibility of nuclear war. While this in itself does not make such a war more likely, it sets perilous consequences in motion.

Once the nation assumes it can survive nuclear war with its basic institutions intact and only a minimal amount of discomfort, then nuclear war is considered neither intolerable nor catastrophic. It becomes, like the other wars of our history, another way of settling grievances. Although Walter Millis may exaggerate when he says, "Unless thermonuclear war can be reestablished in the official mind as something which it is possible both to fight and to survive, it is unlikely that there will be a thermonuclear war," he touches an important aspect of war psychology.

Once nuclear war becomes "humanized" so that it can be reasonably entertained as an alternative to provocation, any action to make it more endurable is not only rational, but patriotic. "Don't you want to survive?" civil defense advocates ask with simple-minded irrelevancy. "Don't you want the nation to recover?" The questions assume the premises of nuclear diplomacy, and if we accept these premises—the arms race, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the genocide of modern warfare—the shelter program makes perfect sense. By this logic, if we are to try to shield ourselves from nuclear death, we must build enormous heat- and blast-proof underground shelters.

In 1960 the authors of "The Community of Fear" wrote prophetically: " The next phase of the arms race will almost certainly involve great emphasis on the area of civilian defense . . . As a result of the emergence of the current tremendous capabilities for killing and destroying, programs will be started aimed at the evacuation of cities, the construction of fallout shelters in regions outside the major metropolitan areas, and the construction of limited underground shelters . . . Once the shelter program is underway, it will constitute a significant retreat from the idea of the obsolescence of war."

By advocating a federal fallout shelter program, the Administration has embarked upon a road which has no end. Millions for shelters lead inexorably, and logically, to billions for shelters. Moreover, thermonuclear war, while becoming ever more likely, is made to seem increasingly survivable.

There is no cheap way out of this *impasse*. To conduct a nuclear diplomacy based upon the continual threat of nuclear war—even at the cost of national suicide—demands the most effective possible shelter system for Americans. To imperil the survival of the American people while not even offering the minimal requirements of civilian protection is tragic irresponsibility. If we want our nuclear diplomacy, and the nuclear weapons that go with it, we had better learn quickly to want fallout shelters and to savor the dubious benefits of an underground civilization.

There is only one alternative: recognition that nuclear war means the end of the Western civilization we share with our friends and our adversary, and that nuclear diplomacy paves the path to nuclear war. This means that the great powers, in the name of self-preservation, must accept the truth that nuclear war cannot solve their grievances and that the unlimited proliferation of nuclear weapons insures only the unlimited destruction of both antagonists. Their continued endurance as civilized societies demands a high price: an immediate halt to the arms race, and nuclear disarmament under controls that would preclude its resumption and at the same time prevent other nations from attaining nuclear status.

Is nuclear disarmament idealistic? Yes. But unless we are willing to renounce our nuclear arms, and our nuclear diplomacy, we had best start digging our shelters as fast, and as deep, as we can.

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Nasser's Next Move

JAMES KRITZECK

THE DISSOLUTION of the United Arab Republic was less a disappointment for the Pan-Arab movement than it was a stinging blow against President Gamal Abdel Nasser. No one familiar with the politics of the Arab world seriously expected any other Arab state voluntarily to surrender its sovereignty to the U.A.R.; but almost no one expected it to collapse either. The fact that it has collapsed, beyond all hope of immediate repair, changes the political picture in the Middle East more significantly than most of our news commentators have been ready to suggest.

More than anything else, it has diminished President Nasser's prestige in the eyes of the world. From any position in the United States or Western Europe it was virtually impossible to realize how great or indeed how deserved that prestige actually was. Any man who could rule Egypt at the age of thirty-five without having taken an economics course in his life, and who could continue to rule it for ten years, is *ipso facto* worthy of a measure of admiration. Not merely in Egypt, but throughout the Arab world and other parts of Asia and Africa, Nasser came to be regarded as a hero by hundreds of millions of people who don't care a whit about the East-West struggle, except insofar as it promises them economic gain or nuclear destruction, but who understand well enough what it is (or could be) to be able to make their own mistakes.

Nasser was a prominent symbol of victory (in this instance especially for the Arabs, who know that the Arabic word *naasir* means "victorious") of simple right over simple wrong in a world whose "great powers" seemed to ignore, misunderstand, or appropriate to their own uses the opinions and feelings of "small powers." Moreover, his record was dazzling. He had ousted a king who was the very symbol of corruption; he had humbled Britain, France, and Israel before the United Nations; he had slapped but still managed to hold both the United States and the Soviet Union as steady suitors; he had been friendly to all anti-colonialist and neutralist causes and leaders; he had done a great deal to raise his country's standard of living; and he had taken several successful steps in the direction of achieving a greater Arab unity.

It is sad but true in respect to popularity of this kind that the higher you climb, the harder you fall; and the simpler the perspective on it, the crueller the conclusion. Nasser would be a greater hero today than ever before if Syria had been invaded by "imperialist" forces to produce the same results. The fact that a part of his own united republic successfully revolted against him has, of course, badly shattered the heroic image. He himself took to the air "with a wounded heart" on October 5 and proclaimed, "I believe in the inevitability of unity between the peoples of the Arab nation as I believe in life and dawn after night. . . . The enemy is imperialism and the reactionary elements cooperating with it. . . . What we have gained through this experience will remain as a treasure for the future."

He immediately turned his attention toward more tangible treasures and instituted a stern and at first blush irrelevant program of "social revolution," meaning essentially taking rich people's money away from them. After that he disappeared from the front pages. Recently he arrested four French diplomats and eight other persons (four Egyptians, one Italian, one Greek, and two French nationals residing in Egypt) on charges of having used the French Properties Commission as a base for spying on the U.A.R. and of plotting his assassination; he celebrated the third anniversary of the construction of the Aswan Dam with notable indifference toward the Russian builders; and he sent his closest associate, Field Marshal Abdul Hakim Amer, to Indonesia to lend assistance to President Sukarno in planning the strategy to annex Netherlands New Guinea. None of these things has been very spectacular, but each of them helps to indicate the lines of his recent and present thinking.

THERE IS NOW some question, for the first time since he assumed personal power in 1953, of Nasser's own political stability. The events of 1956 and 1958 only served to strengthen it; but then the enemies were all "foreign imperialists." Now he has tasted defeat at the hands of his fellow Arabs. Might there not be many pockets of discontent, hitherto sublimated, which will assert themselves now? And granted the ease with which the Syrian secession took place, would his security system even be able to detect them or his army to deflect them? The latter question is the easier to answer; both the security system and the army were rather efficient to start with and they will be even more efficient from now on. Frequent visitors to Egypt seem agreed among themselves that they have heard little

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direct criticism of President Nasser himself from Moslem Egyptians; there was always much to be heard from Syrians.

It is unlikely that the Egyptians hold Nasser in any sense responsible for the Syrian secession. This is as good a place as any to remark that, although excited by the prospect of greater Arab unity, they were somewhat lukewarm to the union with Syria in the first place. Broadly speaking, Syria was an economic liability. Its inhabitants speak a different form of Arabic, wear different native dress, are slightly more apt to be Christians, and in no wise approach the level of sophistication of the people of Egypt--recall, for a moment, your Lawrence Durrell. If anything, the Egyptians may feel a bit sorry for Nasser. He has done everything to avoid justifying that feeling, for he knows that that would be the first step toward house-arrest. The present danger must consist in the possibility of groups of discontented civilians finding helpmeets in the army, which since 1952 has had no great reason to feel discontent but may now smart from the Syrian affront and connect it with other matters of general dissatisfaction.

That, of course, is why the total "social revolution" has come about. Nasser is quickly dispossessing a whole class of people whom he thinks might seek to organize such groups or who might still welcome foreign intervention. One can be as liberal as one likes and still feel sympathy for the poor devils who never were conscious of being "rich" because they received an income from a few villages or "foreign" because they spoke French and traveled abroad, who had already sacrificed plenty because they sincerely believed in the Revolution, who heeded the government's exhortations against financial panic in 1956, and who are now losing practically everything for their trouble. From Nasser's point of view this drastic action must seem absolutely necessary, but one cannot help wondering whether it might not bring about the very thing it is meant to prevent.

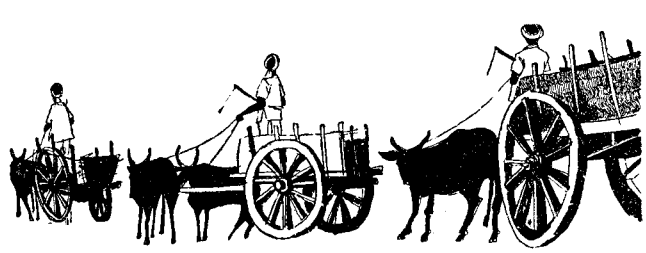
NASSER HAD a mightier reputation than could possibly be restored by means of an internal economic crack-down or even a flashy spy-trial. Probably no head of state has better reason than he to know the importance of keeping people's minds off problems at home by involving them constantly in international affairs. One might justifiably expect, on the basis of present need and past performance, that Nasser's next move will have to be a bold one in the international field, one generally popular with the Arabs and neutrals but not so unpopular with the "great powers" that it would bring the roof crashing down on his head. In fact he must find himself wishing that there were an Egyptian Goa.

Israel is simply no Goa. Although it is the obvious site for a spectacular move by an Arab hero, it is also one which would guarantee the roof to come crashing down. Some basic realignment of the Arab states, however, must be a tempting possibility. Since the short-lived Arab Union between Jordan and Iraq, which was terminated by the Iraqui Revolution of 1958, Egypt and Iraq have been bitter, mud-slinging rivals. That is a pity, since in economic terms no more perfect match could be imagined. Egypt is rich in skills but short on resources; Iraq's situation is precisely the opposite.

Egypt's support of Iraq's claim to Kuwait, which naturally makes Britain so nervous, could mark an important step in bringing about closer co-operation between these two great rivals for leadership of the Arab world. Indications are that Iraq remains cool to such a possibility and would be more attracted to federation with Syria or Jordan if events and feelings in those countries would permit some new step toward Arab unity. At the moment that, too, seems unlikely. Yemen has been tossed out as a white elephant. Nasser has had some dainty compliments for Lebanon lately, but has gotten embroiled in a quarrel with Saudi Arabia over reimbursement for the Egyptian pilgrimages to Mecca. Morocco lies over the ocean of unmovable Libya, fiercely independent Tunisia, and highly uncertain Algeria, all of whom can best be wooed, as Nasser must see it, in concert with the so-called "Casablanca bloc" of independent African states. Within the more restricted and uncomfortable company of the Arab League, he has been wise to say no more about his "wounded heart" as he sounds out new possibilities.

In the meantime Nasser must wish to underscore his peerage among neutralist leaders by donating more moral and material support to their causes and undertakings. Presumably the visit of Field Marshal Amer to Jakarta and the boycott of the Lagos Conference were meant to indicate that. It is about time, too, for Nasser to pay another visit to his own greatest hero, Marshal Tito, who might possibly come up with some fresh suggestions for him. It is difficult to imagine how Nehru, Nkrumah, Castro, or the others could be of much help to him at this juncture, but some bold new pronouncement or action taken in collaboration with one or more of them is certainly not out of the question.

THE ETERNAL question as to whether the present situation may draw Egypt closer to either of the committed Eastern or Western blocs is less important now than it has been at any time since 1952. The long swing back from the Soviet bloc, accelerated since 1959 by



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Red Chinese insults and disparaging remarks from Premier Khrushchev, has only brought the Egyptian pendulum back to stationary center—if that far. Nasser must realize that there are now deep disadvantages in too close a friendship with either bloc. For him, as for an increasing number of "old" neutralists, playing one bloc off against the other has ceased to yield sufficient results. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union seems willing to play the game with them in the same way any more. Any serious change in relations between Red China and the Soviet Union or between the United States and her allies could, of course, alter that situation overnight. Barring those possibilities, Nasser must make his future as a conventional neutralist.

This is no time for a "rumble" in the Middle East. Nasser may or may not be convinced of that fact, but he surely knows that he has to weigh all of the foregoing considerations carefully before he makes his next important move. On account of that necessity the move may not come for some time; but it cannot be delayed too long either. In his *Philosophy of the Revolution* he spoke of "a role in search of a hero . . . a role such as to spark this tremendous power latent in the area surrounding us; a role tantamount to an experiment, with the aim of creating a great strength which will then undertake a positive part in the building of the future of mankind." A great many people thought that he had at least begun to fill that role himself. They have been disappointed. He will have to act boldly again to convince them they were right in the first place.

The Sacraments Are on behalf of Man

The people, men and women together
clasp hands and turn home away.
They will sit at bread and beer, and make love
having prayed Jesus Christ dutifully

who was, say their joined hands, their bodies,
man, boy in the house, burden
in woman's body. So eye to eye we read his text
in ours. And hear in those pages

his voice, brief of speech
long and enduring in love. I could set tonguing
like a parish of bells in time's constant wind

the widow's son arisen, the thousands fed—
loaves, wine, a death.

By one garden tomb
whose dust cries out *He is not here!*

even the world is borne.

DANIEL BERRIGAN

THE STAGE

A Fine Italian Hand

THERE WAS nothing in the Old Vic's "Macbeth" that could have prepared us for their "Romeo and Juliet" a week later. Quite the contrary: such was the ineptness of the first production that one would not have been surprised if the company had slipped quietly out of the country right afterwards, its erstwhile reputation now shattered for good. But like a football team behind forty to nothing at the half, the troupe rallied and came back charging, the secret of the recovery clearly being a change of coaches.

The director of "Macbeth" was Michael Benthall, that of "Romeo and Juliet" Franco Zeffirelli. There is a great deal in a name here, since, as I have said, the only way to account for the transforming leap from one production to the other is by a switch in mentors, and in this case the fact that one man is Italian and the other English counts heavily. It may seem strange that it should count so much in the Italian's favor, for we know the kind of Vesuvian or *opéra-bouffe* Shakespeare Italy is likely to put on the stage. But this time the Italian hand was the right one; the play is one in which, as Henry James said, Shakespeare "Italianized his fancy," and if "Italian" means anything good to us it means lightness, wit and life.

"English," on the other hand, means heaviness, fog and, well, as far as the production of Shakespeare has recently gone, moribundity. Signor Zeffirelli might, for that matter, have been from Dahomey: a fresh look from whatever source is what is wanted. His inventions are not infallibly useful nor is his wit always sure, but his sheer directorial vivacity, the quality of quick, almost headlong animation he makes "Romeo and Juliet" express, is in such great contrast to Mr. Benthall's opaque, creeping, clotted, textbookish "Macbeth" that we seemed to have come in a week from a cemetery to a festival.

Almost everything in this "Romeo and Juliet" moved under its own momentum; everything in "Macbeth" seemed to have been trundled out. The elements of Signor Zeffirelli's staging at least tried to acknowledge what lay behind and what was to come, while in Mr. Benthall's the parts were hermetic, cut off from both history and future. The result was that "Romeo and Juliet," the lesser tragedy, was much the greater experience.

From the opening curtain of "Macbeth," when we are confronted with a backdrop that might have been blown up from an oleograph entitled "Stormy Skies," catastrophe is in the air. And it gets darker. The witches resemble backyard harridans and cavort like them, the Scottish warriors bumble around like members of an

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Elks lodge putting on "Macbeth." As the play goes along, lump by lump, we do not even have the advantage of clear speech, which is of course what English productions are never supposed to fail us in. Most of the performers speak either too hurriedly or with a peculiar lack of resonance, some exceptions being Barbara Jefford, whose Lady Macbeth is quite a sound if not an exalted one, and Nicholas Meredith as Banquo. John Clements plays Macbeth with a tenacious hold upon the dozen square inches of imaginative (and physical) ground which measure his capacities or which have been allotted to him by Mr. Benthall—and I suspect the latter is the more important factor.

No, the whole production betrays that academic approach to Shakespeare which results in a display, a pageant, a set of readings shoved into motion, everything faithful to the text, but not to its spirit, lacking cohesion, continuity and a submission of the parts to the whole. A series of tableaux, of stiff entrances and exits, of insular moments and arbitrary effects—and all because there has been no re-grasping of the drama as a single action, however complex (in the case of "Macbeth," Francis Fergusson has described it, taking a line from the play, as "outrunning the pauser, reason"), and therefore requiring a single clear and unimpeded line of movement and expression if it is not to remain for us the thronging, fragmented, self-engorging spectacle that Shakespeare most often is in our theaters.

Signor Zeffirelli's "Romeo" does exhibit such an unbroken line. He has made changes to that end: cutting down the speeches of Friar Laurence, omitting the scene with Peter and the musicians, having Mercutio die on-stage; and he has filled the spaces in the text with lively if not always entirely appropriate action. But, most importantly, he has allowed the native speed of the play, its impetuosity and sense of onrushing fatality to operate freely, and he has bound its elements together, so that at the end we know what this particular Shakespearian vision was: the fate of innocence and ideality at the hands of practicality and measurement, the former triumphing finally through having "held fast."

What keeps the production from being a superlative one, besides Signor Zeffirelli's occasional lapses of taste (there is really no need to have quite so much horseplay in the interstices) is the quality of the performances, which while better by far than those of "Macbeth" are nevertheless not fully up to the job. The weakness is greatest on the lower levels: with Tybalt, Montague and Capulet, the friar and, especially, the nurse, whom Rosalind Atkinson plays in as burlesque a manner as she did a witch in "Macbeth."

John Stride's Romeo and the Juliet of Joanna Dunham are better. They are both handsome and animated and at times their work together is tremendously appealing, their balcony scene (since everybody naturally asks) being distinguished by a freshness of movement, an unforced ardor and the subtlest kind of alternation between playfulness and passion. Yet they tend, especially Miss Dunham, to be less effective in their longer speeches and soliloquies, their bodies having reached a higher level of instrumentality than their voices, and this is one of the reasons why the production tends to lose some of its vigor and clarity toward the end, when the lovers are so often apart and lack each other's physical stimulation and reciprocating warmth.

The one performer who never once flags is Edward Atienza in the role of Mercutio. It is a commonplace that almost anybody can steal the show in that part, but Mr. Atienza is something special. He is pellucidly fine in his sardonic or bawdy duties, but he is most rare and beautiful in a place we do not ordinarily expect it, in his dying, where he manages with amazing sureness the transition from wit and sensuality and bucko spirits to accusing pain and horror. He is a model for one kind of Shakespearian actor, as Signor Zeffirelli is for one kind of director. *(At the City Center.)* RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

Ennui, Anyone?

IF HOLLYWOOD wonders why it is no longer the movie capital of the world, it might look at some of the films Americans have been turning out lately. Too many of them are tired remakes or repeats—not necessarily bad movies, but films with so little new to offer that audiences have a vague feeling as they watch the listless reels unwind that they've seen all this before. Several of the effete products now on our screens are typical.

Producer-director Leo McCarey, for instance, is doubtless proud of his 1944 film, "Going My Way," in which the innovations of a young, sweat-shirt-wearing priest (Bing Crosby) were rather upsetting to a lovable, well-established pastor (Barry Fitzgerald). But McCarey should have left well enough alone. Instead, he and scriptwriter Claude Binyon have re-writtened the theme from a story by Pearl S. Buck into a screenplay set in 1949 Southwest China. "Satan Never Sleeps" (20th Century-Fox) not only has the problems caused by the Chinese Reds when they sweep down from the North on the old priest and his mission, but also those brought on when he suspects there's something going on between the young priest and the cute Chinese girl who cooks for them.

Although Clifton Webb plays the older priest at first as if he were still the supercilious Mr. Belvedere in "Sitting Pretty," he becomes quite serious about the role when the Communists get tough and is really effec-

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tive as the tortured religious who refuses to sign a false confession. William Holden, who no longer gives the illusion of breezy youth, looks old enough as the other priest to register more than pain and embarrassment before the vicious Reds and the lovesick girl. In spite of Webb's raised eyebrows and the girl's enthusiasm for the young priest, Holden has no more interest in her than he would have in any of his parishioners; and as cute as France Nuyen is as his determined pursuer, that whole situation gets rather tiresome. Furthermore, the pseudo-romantic fun-and-games and the extremely serious Red oppression are an unfortunate mixture. Leo McCarey may have meant well with his Chinese-set going-my-way; but neither the direction of his cast nor the production (photographed in Great Britain) are convincing or inspiring.

WHEN GEORGE Stevens made "Gunga Din" in 1939, he came up with a rip-roaring adventure film that gave a nod to its Kipling sources and had some feeling for history as Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Victor McLaglen, with Sam Jaffe as their water boy, battled fanatical Thugs in India. Now Frank Sinatra has produced "Sergeants Three" (United Artists) with a script by W. R. Burnett, who uses practically the same plot without any mention of the original scenarists or even Rudyard. Set in the 1870 Dakotas with a band of American Indians as villains who are determined to exterminate all whites, "Sergeants Three" is actually a vehicle for Sinatra and his clan. He, Dean Martin and Peter Lawford play the title roles, while Joey Bishop turns up as a prudish staff sergeant who doesn't approve of their horsing around, and Sammy Davis, Jr. plays a fawning ex-slave who adores the three fun-loving sergeants. Also on hand are three of the Crosby boys (Phillip, Dennis, Lindsay) who contribute practically nothing but their presence to the proceedings.

It's hard to tell how much director John Sturges had to do with what we see, but everything moves so fast and makes such little sense that it doesn't matter. There's a great deal of fighting and slapstick during the cavalry's pursuit of the Indians. Youngsters who don't particularly care what the characters do will enjoy the action; oldsters, fed up with the inane plot and clowning clan, will appreciate the stunning scenery which was photographed in color in Utah. Audiences of all ages, whether or not they look for something more stimulating than action before beautiful backgrounds, may at least agree that you're a better man than I am, Gunga Din.

THE BOX office success of Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho" has brought forth many an imitation of that shocking thriller, some better, most worse. The latest (and one hopes the last) of the series is "The Couch" (Warners) which producer-director Owen Crump tried to give a semi-documentary air, but which wound up as a lurid melodrama. The story concerns a young psychopath who goes around stabbing people with icepicks. Since he's under analysis and since he usually phones the police before he makes his kill, one begins to wonder why his psychiatrist and the Homicide Squad are so slow in catching up with him.

It would be unfair to reveal why the young fellow, who is played with a great deal of surface charm by Grant Williams, carries on in this way, but in any case he seems to have more icepicks at his disposal than an iceman. Under Crump's direction, the film has some good shots of its Los Angeles locale. and the acting is quite satisfactory, especially that of Williams as the patient, Onslow Stevens as the psychiatrist, and Shirley Knight as his receptionist who foolishly breaks all rules by going out on dates with the patient. In spite of its pretentions, "The Couch" is really more sensational than scientific and can serve little more purpose than to fill the other half of a double bill.

IT IS NOT only the Americans who turn out tiredly pretentious movies. The French have sent over "Black Tights," (Magna Pictures) which consists of four ballets by Roland Petit; and while these may interest students of the ballet, their total effect is that of elaborate mediocrity. The dancing is lively enough; and the leading ladies are good to look at, especially Cyd Charisse (in an item about a merry widow), Moira Shearer (who makes a lovely Roxanne in "Cyrano"), and Zizi Jeanmaire (who appears twice, first in a silly number about a dame who eats diamonds, and later as the tempestuous heroine in "Carmen"); and the men dancing with them work hard to give the whole thing spirit and lift: Roland Petit himself, Dirk Sanders, George Reich, and a large chorus. But two hours of movie ballet is too much; and the final effect, with all the dazzling colors and costumes plus the unnecessary introductions by Maurice Chevalier who overdoes the bogus charm, is that of middle-class music hall entertainment.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

AN APPEAL: The thousands of abandoned children sheltered by Korean Sisters have no one to supply the special medicines, vitamins and school expenses they require. They are orphans—victims of war, mass exile, social disruption and immemorial poverty. To meet this need Catholic Relief Services has just set up a plan whereby Americans "adopt" one of these Korean orphans for only ten dollars a month. Each sponsor will receive a photograph and hear from the boy or girl once a month. Interested readers should address: Help-A-Child—NCCW, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington 5, D.C.

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"A Word for McGuffey"

Lincoln, R.I.

TO THE EDITORS: In his article "A Word for McGuffey" [Jan. 26], Father John Whitney Evans has drawn a disturbing picture of a generation of children condemned to a lifetime of twisting cats' tails, reading only soup wrappers, and lacking in appreciation for or even a knowledge of good literature. Father Evans further states that these children are condemned to this deplorable state by the basic reader. This conclusion, however, is based on three unsupported assumptions: first, that there is nothing of literary value in the basic reader; second, that the basic reader constitutes the complete reading program; and third, that mere exposure to the writings of certain literary figures will automatically ensure an appreciation of literature.

Reading is the process of bringing meaning to the printed word in order to receive meaning. Children must be taught to read for a variety of purposes; not the least of these purposes is appreciation of good material. The most efficient way to accomplish this is by use of materials constructed in accord with what research has proved about the nature of the learning process and the growth and development of children. This is the basic reader. Its controlled vocabulary allows emphasis to be placed on the skills necessary for attacking new words and for interpreting new material. If the average child learns 5,000 new words a year, it is because of the controlled presentation rather than in spite of it.

There is, necessarily, some inclusion of materials which are completely functional. A check of several commonly used texts, however, reveals materials written by Jonathan Swift, Pearl Buck, Carl Sandburg, Marguerite Henry, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Phyllis McGinley, Christiana Rosetti, Vachel Lindsay, none of whom form the vanguard of an anti-intellectual movement.

In effect, the basic reader is just that—basic. It serves as a springboard to other material. Any good reading program includes the use of a wide number of supplementary texts as well as trade books which include the literature of the past as well as of the present. No basic text could possibly contain our entire literary heritage. Nor should it attempt to do so. A basic reader is a tool used to develop reading skills necessary for comprehension of a wide variety of materials.

It would seem the author believes we have not progressed from the days when every child in every classroom did the same thing at the same moment. No book teaches a child either how to read or how to appreciate literature. No book alone will develop taste. A teacher must attempt to put the right book in the right hands at the right time. A child exposed to material which is not suited to him is more likely to develop a distaste rather than a taste for it. The teacher must provide for children whose parents have never read a book as well as for children who have already discovered the wonderful world of ideas. Any teacher knows that a child who may be ready to recognize the words of "Macbeth" may not have the emotional maturity necessary for enjoyment or even complete comprehension. It is the teacher who by his own delight in good literature encourages the children to share in it.

It is true that children can grasp "grand concepts," but the concept must be presented within a context the child can comprehend. (This is brought out by Jerome Brunner, *The Process of Education,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1960.) In former times, even after John Newbery and *Goody Two Shoes,* children were forced to borrow adult books because no literature existed for them. Today, there is a whole wealth of literature by "mature, compassionate" minds written just for children and of a quality acknowledged by discerning adults. There is no need to drag children through "Great Literature" before they are ready for it.

A child understands the recurrent theme. A person's a person, no matter how small, in Dr. Seuss's *Horton Hears a Who.* When he finishes De Jong's *Tower by the Sea,* he will have grasped "All God's creatures have the right to live." A child can be a friend of God like St. Patrick in the Landmark Series, or overcome the handicap of a withered arm like *Johnny Tremaine,* or realize the *Moffats* were happy and successful without money or prestige. These are better heroes than any invented by Horatio Alger whose main premise that virtue is rewarded materially is a concept utterly divorced from reality.

When one child says, "I love it when you read to us. It is better than television because I help make the pictures," and a boy with an eye still blackened by a wildly pitched ball asks, "Have you read the *Corn Fairies*? I think it sounds like poetry," there is no need to worry about Tolstoi and Saroyan and Shakespeare lying neglected on dusty shelves later on.

There could be many reasons for children not discovering the joys of literature: a certain disdain on the part of large segments of society, poor teaching, overcrowded classes, a stifling presentation. There is no justification for a crash program of Whitman and Eliot in Grade Two.

If Father Evans knows a ten-year-old who is about

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to twist a cat's tail, he need not throw his basic reader into the trash can or hand him an *Eclectic Reader*. He might try interesting him in Robert Lawson's *Rabbit Hill*. Better still, he might read it with him. They will both love it.

KATHLEEN A. BALL

The Author Replies

Duluth, Minn.

TO THE EDITORS: While there are numerous points of agreement between what Miss Ball has written and my views, as a re-reading of my remarks will make clear, there are also points of divergence.

I do not think, for instance, that all our youngsters are really condemned to the anatomical pranks and culinary pastimes to which Miss Ball refers. As she herself suggests, good homes and inspired teachers will still save many of our children in spite of inadequate school readers. I will also look to librarians, high level television, and FM radio for at least some help.

Nor do I think that the basic premise of my remarks is "based upon unsupported assumptions." I did not assume, in the first place, that there is "nothing of literary value in the basic reader." I said that these books and their controlled vocabularies are "intended to prepare for literature." But I think that on this very point Miss Ball has contradicted herself, and thereby underlined my position.

Let us agree that reading is the "process of bringing meaning to the printed word in order to receive meaning." Researchers have warned us for the past decade that we have not developed readers that are adequate to the experiences of mid-20th-century children. This is true of the "average child," the above average child, and especially so where certain ethnic groups are concerned. And I roundly disagree that children learn approximately 5000 new words each year *because* of the controlled vocabulary. A recent study in Denver carried on among pre-school children indicates that the words they learned from older children in the family who read television commercials with them is only one of several sources that might be cited in support of the view that our basic readers too often underestimate the experiences and development of children. Furthermore, I wish it to be clear that I am not only objecting to certain schools of educational theory and methodology. I think that some publishers of texts have been lax and unimaginative, if not lazy and greedy.

Secondly, I may have been guilty of implying that "the basic reader constitutes the complete reading program." This, obviously, is not accurate. But to what extent have school boards, superintendents, and teachers fallen into rigid patterns of instruction in reading by relying to much upon "scientifically" compiled vocabulary lists, and the readers composed from them? To what extent do "supplementary" readers fail to rise above the same shallow, unchallenging grooves? High school drop-out studies, college entrance examinations, and military service texts yield discouraging evidence to support my basic contention.

Lastly, "mere exposure to the writings of certain literary figures will (not) automatically ensure an appreciation of literature." The word to be underlined here is "automatically." I do not know what this means, although the epistemological ramifications would be interesting to follow. Permit me only to state the obvious. The reading of literature is a *sine qua non* of developing taste and intelligence. Given literature, the inspired teacher, the understanding parent, the zealous librarian will educe the capacities of the pupil. But I seriously doubt if even a Frank Baxter could enthuse little boys and girls if all he had to offer them was the insipid mish-mash too many of our children are expected to savor day after day.

Let me conclude by joining Miss Ball in praising the writers she has cited. Would that they were used more, both in school and at home! Since I have not been able to find a ten-year-old about to twist the tail of a cat, I have not yet read *Rabbit Hill*. But I have enjoyed some of the other books greatly. And I wish to thank Miss Ball for crediting me with a sense of humor. Too many of those who hotly espouse the cause of McGuffey seem to lack this very literate quality.

(Rev.) JOHN WHITNEY EVANS

Lament

(after Rainer Maria Rilke)

Everything is far
and long gone by.
I believe the star
that shines so high
is dead a thousand years.
I believe something fearful
was said in the boat
that passed so near.
In the house a clock
is striking . . .
In whose house?
I would like to break out of my heart
under the great sky.
I would like to pray.
Of all the stars
there must be one that's there.
I think I know
which one it is;
which one stands at the end of its beam
in the sky, like a white city.

ALAN GOLDFARB

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A Trio of Fine First Novels

Notes From A Dark Street. By Edward Adler. Knopf. $2.95.
Joy to Levine! By Norma Stahl Rosen. Knopf. $3.50.
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest. By Ken Kesey. Viking. $4.95.

by William James Smith

MORE THAN twenty-six hundred volumes of new fiction were published in the United States last year. In addition, almost forty-five hundred works of fiction were published in Great Britain. Allowing for duplication in those two lists, and for the great quantity of non-serious fiction—mysteries, westerns and the like—it still leaves a huge number of earnestly conceived novels struggling for a place in the sun, for a mere reading if not for a place on the best seller list.

These figures have been growing exponentially. No one "keeps up" with current fiction any more. The best you can do is keep from being swept away, and detecting trends is like detecting currents in a tidal wave that is bearing down on you.

It would be in a way consoling to think that most of this enormous output was trash, not worth reading anyway. Probably this is quantitatively true, but even eliminating ninety per cent of the fiction list at a glance leaves a great many worthwhile books that very simply no one is ever going to get around to reading. And anyone who does any reading off the best seller trail knows that annually any number of fine books sink without a trace.

There is a common belief among readers that the good survives by some mysterious process of selectivity and the second-rate goes down the drain of history. This is the theory used by people who do not read a book until it is ten years old. And pragmatically it is unbeatable. Few English majors burrowing in the forgotten shelves of literature come up with a novel that is crying for readmission to the world of light. When they're dead they're dead. Too many new books are crying for attention to devote much time to resuscitating the old.

Norma Stahl Rosen, Edward Adler and Ken Kesey have gotten into the race early this year with a clutch of fine first novels. Whether they will get read or not is another matter. At the moment they are probably throwing down martinis at publishers' cocktail parties and evolving modest replies to compliments and not worrying too much about posterity.

Any trends they may represent are obscure to me. These three novels certainly have little in common. The "psychological" approach perhaps, though that is nothing new. An openness of mind, a freedom from dogmatism, an originality, perhaps—but these are simply qualities of good fiction, and neither new nor, sorry to say, trends. Let me, in fact, say the worst of all three books, and have done with it—they are competent. Perhaps I will be forgiven this canard if I say this does not rule out other excellences.

Mrs. Rosen, to put my foot in it further, is not only competent, she is sweet and charming—and I hope, having uttered that foul opinion, that I may never meet her, because I expect she could be fairly devastating, too. Her novel is called *Joy to Levine!* and if I were to attempt to place her by comparison I would say that she is an American—a very American—Henry Green. Mr. Green, I believe, has said that his aim is to draw tears from a stone and surely Mrs. Rosen could do that without trying, and with a niceness and honesty of observation that cancels out any sentimentality.

Her hero, Arnold Levine, is one of life's unaggressive and self-defeating people, but he has awkwardly come to terms with his own shortcomings. He works for the Rutborough company, the moribund American promoters of a British shorthand system, The Most Perfect System in the World. Rutborough and its employees have all been gently but irrevocably kissed by failure and desuetude. Arnold loves fat Theresa and plies her with sweets so she won't become thin and reveal her beauty to less timid suitors.

Levine's courtship is the novel. His father urges him to get a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles and be a big executive. Levine agonizes instead over the difficulties of marrying a Catholic girl only to discover at long last that Theresa is quite safely Jewish—and, typically, this merely leads to further discouragement. Shy Theresa finally goes off to Slenderella leaving Arnold to reflect wryly that though he may not be young anymore he is at least immature. Of course it all turns out well in the end, as it should, and Theresa and Arnold end up seated side by side on the sofa practicing shorthand—Rutborough, The Most Perfect System in the World. It is a sweet and acridly funny novel.

Mrs. Rosen ends her novel. Mr. Kesey and Mr. Adler do not—they call a halt. In Mr. Kesey's case this is makeshift at best and in Mr. Adler's it is nearly catastrophic. Mr. Kesey's milieu in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is a psychiatric ward in an Army hospital. His narrator is a huge psychotic Indian who is brought reluctantly back to the world of the living by a new inmate, a lusty brawler named McMurphy, who feigns insanity to be transferred out of a prison work camp. The villainess is Big Nurse, who holds, rather implausibly, the threat of prefrontal lobotomy over any non-conformist in her loony little world.

I always put up some resistance to a coy invitation on the part of an author to interpret in a larger framework, especially when it seems, as it does in this case, an attempt of fairly doubtful conviction on the author's part. Mr. Kesey is a rough diamond, all in all. He builds up an atmosphere of real horror and significance and then dispels it ineffectively with some quite misplaced slapstick. The book never gets back firmly on the track and a flurry of activity at the end isn't quite lively enough to disguise the fact that it's getting nowhere. McMurphy and Big Chief Bromden, however, are character triumphs and Big Nurse is as near to a walking nightmare as

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you'll come across in this year's literary output.

Mr. Adler's book is the most ambitious of the three. All readers will immediately note his indebtedness to Joyce and to Nathanael West, and not to Mr. Adler's discredit. His novel is a miniature *Walpurgisnacht* about—of all things—life on Avenue D or some forgotten side street nearby. All of his characters are grotesques, from his wooden-legged hero to the frightful hags that sleep in the basement of the tenement. They move in a nightmare ritual of death and grief, diseased love and hate—and they very nearly move right out of this world into one confined to Mr. Adler's skull.

Mr. Adler has, in other words, tackled the arduous task of making the grotesque, the phantasmagoric, artistically believable. To do this successfully the dream world must be tied down in some way to the real world. In Joyce's Nighttown, for example, the phenomenal world moves constantly in the background in its commonplace, however sordid, reality. In West, reality is anchored in a suffering central character through whom the nightmare is reflected and whom we may view with rationality as well as sympathy.

Mr. Adler does not employ either of these techniques. His narrator is a blank. Barney Yago views the world around him with a recording eye. What he feels beyond a certain nausea, we have, for the most part, to guess at. He is involved with his characters only as a writer taking notes. It may be in just this, though, that the measure of his success is attained. The world he views is not this one but it is thoroughly documented—his note-taking is meticulous in each vivid, repellent detail. It almost makes the wild vision real. But not quite. We are left with a little, but fatal, frown of disbelief.

The conclusion of the novel, moreover, flaws it beyond repair. On the very last page it turns out that the book was a treatise against slum landlords! This is so anticlimactic after two hundred pages of cosmic overtones that the book falls into a shambles. Mr. Adler's demented gallery of grotesques deserves better than that. The book is about death, not absentee landlords. I suspect that what Mr. Adler really wanted to say was that life is a nightmare, and death is always with us, and that he shied away from that as too pretentious and settled for a little stock melodrama. I hope that he will write another novel in which he says his horrendous worst.

The Intellectual in Modern Politics

Three Intellectuals in Politics. James Joll. Pantheon. $4.50.

by John Ratté

CAN "a man of intellectual honesty, moral principles, and personal sensibility . . . ever make a successful politician in the twentieth century?" James Joll makes this question the theme of these three narrative and analytical studies, handsomely written and rich in the reference they make to the worlds of art, politics, literature and society. Taken as a whole, they suggest a negative answer which should not cease to be disquieting no matter how many times it is given.

Leon Blum is the predominating figure of the book, as well as the most attractive. So much so, in fact, that the reader may find it difficult to refrain from using Blum's career as a measuring stick for those of Walther Rathenau and Filippo Marinetti, even though the introduction clarifies the several ways in which the three men are comparable. It is true that the careers of all three raise the question of how far, if at all, the intellectual "can stand up to the strain of the ruthless machine politics of the twentieth century, and whether the intellectual in politics is not always going to be doomed to failure because of the nature of his own virtues"; but only Leon Blum, whose fifty years of activity as literary critic, successful lawyer, social theorist, Socialist leader, Prime Minister of the Popular Front in France in 1936, and anti-Communist "con-

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sultant-specialist" to the Fourth Republic, ended only in 1950, faced all the exigencies of twentieth century politics, and possessed those elusive "virtues" in such a range and with such consistency as to make his failure both unambiguous and noble. Mr. Joll admits Blum's various defects, but his eagerness to de-emphasize the doctrinaire aspects of his subject's mind contributes not only to the favorable impression we gain of the man, but also to his predominance over Rathenau and Marinetti.

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Yet Rathenau, like Marinetti and unlike Blum, was neither a true intellectual nor a true politician. He was suspect to the intellectual leaders of his age, had his works printed at his own expense, and saw them read not in Germany, but in Sweden. And even allowing for his temperamental reluctance to engage in politics, as a Jew he could never make his way from an advisory to an active role in German politics the way Blum could as a Jew in France, through full participation in the world of party politics, elections and legislative service.

The gap widens with Marinetti, who glorified "war—the only cure for the world—militarism, patriotism, the destructive genius of the anarchists, the beautiful ideas which kill, and contempt for women," and who worked with that intellectual eclectic and ex-Socialist, Benito Mussolini, in building Fascism. But his early entry into political activity is different from that of Rathenau at fifty or Blum at forty, primarily because it is not comparable. Militant action was an organic part of the Futurist philosophy even when Futurism was only concerned with liberating art and literature from the dead world of museums and academies. Moreover, it was only one of the paths which led to Fascism ("if it had been the only one, Fascism would not have had to be taken so seriously"), and Marinetti himself did not play any leading role in the political movement to which he had helped to give a jargon, if not an ideology.

But Professor Joll's broad use of the words "politics" and "intellectual" is more than justified by the intrinsic interest of the lives of these three men and their usefulness as introductions to the political and cultural atmosphere of France, Germany, and Italy in the early twentieth century.

Although Marinetti is the most eccentric, Rathenau is the most exotic —and tragic—of the three subjects: a man caught in a series of contradictions which his own turgid metaphysics reflect. He built his own career and fortune as an engineer, even though his father held the Edison patents for Germany, and yet always thought of himself as a philosopher and literary man; he was rabidly Prussian, and yet self-consciously Jewish; he was eager for Germany to win the First World War and eager afterwards for her to accept the consequences of causing, and losing, the war; he was a millionaire, and yet he foresaw the inevitability of state control of industry; he feared political activity, and yet became foreign minister of the Weimar Republic and negotiated the unpopular Rapallo Treaty with Russia in 1922; finally, he was assassinated that year by those same young blond gods of the Prussian plains from whom he had once demanded a new Germany, a demand soon to be fulfilled beyond all imagining.

Mystic and Poet

The New Man. By Thomas Merton. Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. $3.50.

by Leonard F. X. Mayhew

RELIGIOUS contemplation aims at that unimpeded penetration of reality which often so tantalizingly eludes the step-by-step workings of even expert reasoning. Unlike the poet, who follows an analogous path, the mystic has no inner limitation on his activity since even an ultimate expression of his knowledge is not demanded. When the mystic is a poet as well, then we can expect a word of great beauty. We can also be a little apprehensive about the clarity and intellectual discipline of the result. Both these expectations are fulfilled in the present book.

Thomas Merton is a contemplative and poet whose message is more widely known to his contemporaries than that of any comparable figure. His most recent book indicates that his stature, whatever real meaning such a judgment can possibly have, has grown phenomenally since, for example, *Seeds Of Contemplation* of a dozen or more years ago. He has penetrated deeply into the meaning of Christ and Christian thought and the cumulative experience of the Church. He has acquired as well—and this will seem paradoxical or even impossible to those with a comic-book notion of cloistered life

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—a profound understanding of the peculiarly contemporary questions which demand an authentic Christian answer.

Father Louis' line of thought moves more or less in this direction: To be truly alive means to acquire a realization and fulfillment of our true selves. Preliminary to this self-realization there must be a recognition that we are not what we seem, not even what we think ourselves to be. We can only find our true selves in Christ, the Word, in the image and likeness of Whom each man is created.

A man will be able to live in Christ only by cutting away all that interferes with the development of the likeness of God within him. In the first place this means pride. A man's life in Christ, that is to say in union with God, is both contemplative and dynamic, accomplished both in interior dialogue with God and in external activity by which man impresses God's image on his world. The Christian Sacraments are effective signs which progessively illumine the true self of the Christian.

Father Louis' thought on the new man is inspired by Scriptural and patristic sources. It is entirely clear that personal experience has contributed greatly to what he expounds, and this, together with his native literary talent, gives great vitality to his expression. It is difficult nevertheless to avoid the conclusion that this kind of experience is to varying degrees incommunicable. Perhaps that explains the occasional, disconcerting lapses of logic. When, for example, he comes up against the grace and free will mystery and controversy, he dismisses it with a facile "plague on both your houses" and proceeds to adopt now one and then the other contradictory side of the celebrated argument. There is also a mystifying note to his exegesis of the biblical account of Adam's fall, in which he urges us to consider that "this was objectively a bad tree," whatever that may mean.

On the positive side (which far outweighs the negative) Father Louis' demonstration of the inadequacy of a promethean ethic and his treatment of the religious character of work are masterful. One of his most telling insights concerns contemplative self-knowledge which, he shows, will destroy the objectivization of our self which we use as a pretense and defense against the discovery of our true selves and the beginning of real life with its uncompromising demands.

It is difficult to pass ultimate judgment on a book such as this. The wish may all too easily be mother to the thought. At the same time, a mystic and poet who can speak to us of our own world, even imperfectly, is too great a boon to permit an excessive caution to hinder our pausing to listen. Thomas Merton's voice is stirring and almost always clear. We should listen to it.

REVIEWERS

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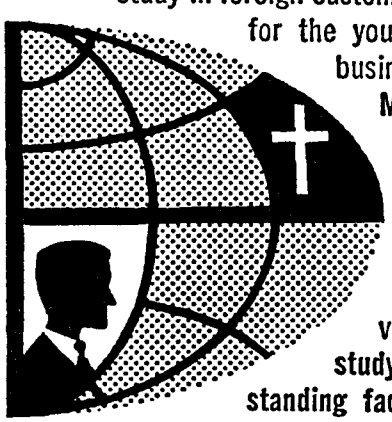

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